

# Magazine Feature Section

## WHY "NUTS" ARE AMONG THE GREATEST BALL PLAYERS

Single-track Mind a Peculiar Equipment Of Some Of the Best Of Diamond Stars—"Rube" Waddell, Now Dead, Set An Example That Has Found Many Imitators In the Big Leagues—Eccentricity a Big Drawing Card

John McGraw, Clark Griffith and other managers have a saying that they like their ball players a little "queer."

It is a peculiar fact that in a business which pays tremendous salaries some of the biggest stars of baseball are "nuts."

There were "Rube" Waddell and "Bugs" Raymond, two of the greatest pitchers who ever flung a ball across a plate. They were "nuts" of the most pronounced type.

A "nut" when it comes to analysis, at least in baseball, is a gentleman who esteems himself highly.

It is this sort of ball player who makes the best player.

The player who thinks he can beat the other fellow at anything, who never is out in his own mind no matter what the umpire may say, who thinks he is better than any pitcher and consequently can hit anything that ever was tossed across a plate, is withal a better player than one whose intelligence may tell him that he cannot do or is not all these things.

### THE LATEST "NUT."

Benny Kauff, who is flashing across the Federal league cutcheon this season, and who is said to be the best young ball player that has been developed since Ty Cobb broke in, is said to be a "nut."

Benny loads himself down with some \$3,000 worth of diamonds everytime he dons his street clothes.

He is a fighter of the Zimmerman order, wholly without temperament but with plenty of temper, and not at all given to introspection.

He has what novelists call, a single-track mind. These single-track mind ball players are the best.

J. Franklin Baker was a conspicuous example of the ball player with the single track mind.

If he hadn't been he never could have made a home run in a world's series—four of them in fact.

When Baker faced "Rube" Marquard in that famous series he concentrated entirely upon the matter at hand which was to hit the baseball.

He was not thwarted in his design by the multitudinous extraneous detail of a world's series—the fact that 30,000 fans were yelling at him and wondering if he could sustain the record he had made as a slugger.

It is these players who are constantly wondering what the other fellows are thinking of them that fail miserably in the "big leagues."

A man may burn up a minor league and yet when he reaches the

BRANCH RICKEY IN A HAPPY MOOD

major leagues his imagination runs riot, he is unable to concentrate—and he fails.

"Nuts" as a rule are unimaginative players. They have single-track minds and they can concentrate. Combined with a vaulting egotism which is the thirty-third degree of pure conceit, the average baseball "nut" has precisely the correct state of mind to do things under stress—when the imaginative fellow, less sure of himself and too much aware of his responsibility cracks wide open and goes down in baseball history as another "bloomer."

### THE COLLEGIAN.

Branch Rickey, manager of the St. Louis Browns, favors a ball team of ex-collegiate players. He maintains they are mentally more active and consequently able to play more and better baseball than the man

FRANK BAKER

NAPOLEON LAJOIE

BENNY KAUFF

agitation that ran riot. They were impervious to the pit-falls built by this one quality that has taken many men out of the big leagues who mechanically were able to play big league baseball could they have done it under stress.

Lajoie is of the phlegmatic type. His confidence in himself is illimitable.

There never was a pitcher that Lajoie secretly did not believe he could hit safely anytime he wished.

Cobb is of the more dynamic type, gifted with an imagination, but with an aggression which completely offsets any deleterious effect common to mental introspection.

Cobb must have imagination else he could not devise and execute the base running plays he continually plays on catchers. He is naturally smart and congenitally aggressive. His aggression is greater than his imagination for what his brain devises his body fights for with the most vicious vitality extant on the diamond.

### UNIMAGINATIVE PLAYERS.

Jackson, Zimmerman and Kauff are unimaginative fellows with precisely the right state of mind to do things on the baseball field, for they are bothered only by one thing at a time, minds perfectly single tracked!

Such players are more apt to do things in the pinch that the smarter ball player, given to moods that are influenced by immaterial detail, cannot do.

For example, when Cobb steps to the plate he goes there to get a hit because Cobb can get a hit when Cobb wants to, or so he thinks. The imaginative player goes to the plate to get a hit because it will help his team to win and vindicate him in the eye of certain carping critics, etc. Perceive the distinction in the difference! Cobb is concerned only with getting a hit—concentration—as against the other fellow who is concerned with getting a hit because it means, etc.—imagination. Concentration against imagination. The single-track mind against the mind trained to operate a dozen tracks.

Baseballically the victory always will be on the side of the single-track mind, though usually they are as John McGraw says, "a little queer."

what the newspapers are saying of him, caring less what they think of him and concentrating entirely on the matter at hand which is to hit the ball, field it and run the bases.

It is a fact that only one great star before the public today is a college man and whatever damaging imagination his mind training gave him he offsets by the most beautiful concentration ever seen on a baseball field.

That man is Edward Trowbridge Collins, a graduate of the University of Columbia, and accounted one

of the swiftest thinkers in baseball. A NOTABLE EXCEPTION.

Lacking physical ruggedness to stand the gruelling strain of a championship race, one after another, Collins substitutes for this a remarkable concentration. He can put more life into a single play than any man on any infield in baseball today.

But Lajoie, Jackson, Zimmerman, Bresnahan, Kauff and dozens of other first-water players came into the league relatively illiterate. They were unhampered by any im-

and declares that for the very reason college men have minds trained to think they cannot fail to be more imaginative and hence more susceptible to the extraneous detail of the

game. For that reason he counts them of less value than the single-track mind that comes off the sand-lots, reads scarcely well enough to know

whose mind had not been trained to think.

Clarke Griffith, "Foxy Grif," as he is known to baseball fans of a nation, widely disagrees with Rickey